



THE
RE
No.

Cl. 244 Bk. M974

THE ETHEL CARR PEACOCK
MEMORIAL COLLECTION

Matris amori monumentum



TRINITY COLLEGE LIBRARY

DURHAM, N. C.

1903

Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Dred Peacock

251
7

HELP OR HINDER:

A Tract on Missions.

By Rev. James Atkins, D. D.,

PRESIDENT ASHEVILLE FEMALE COLLEGE.

Issued by Direction of the Board of Missions of the
W. N. C. Conference, M. E. Church, South, 1896.

ASHEVILLE PRINTING COMPANY, 3 E. COURT SQUARE,
ASHEVILLE, N. C.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2014

HELP OR HINDER.

The Vision at Troas.

A JEW slept at Troas. His body was weary with the travel of the day, and his mind was burdened with thoughts of the great work which had been given him to do, and of the strange providence which had led him thither. In the stillness and solemnity of the night he had a vision.

There stood up before him a Greek from across the Ægean Sea, within the sound of which the Hebrew was sleeping. The Greek spoke to the Jew in the vision, and pleaded with him for help—help not for himself alone, but for his people. The Jew was St. Paul, who, in his second great missionary tour, had come by the fastnesses of the Taurus Mountains into the central section of Asia Minor. Thence he had desired to go into Bithynia, the most northerly part of Asia, that he might sow the seeds of the gospel upon the shores of the Euxine Sea.

But this was not God's plan: Asia had the gospel, Europe had it not; and the Spirit led the apostle to Troas, a sea-port on the north-eastern shore of the Ægean Sea. Just across that sea was Macedonia, an important Greek colony.

While Paul rested at Troas, God revealed to him the direction of his future labors in this vision, of which St. Luke, Paul's companion, says: "There stood a man of Macedonia and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia and help us." This was a sublime scene. Note that he to whom this vision came was a Jew from Jerusalem, the religious centre of Syria. He was of a people illustrious in all lands by a thousand displays of God's power and majesty, running back through four thousand years, and reaching into the very cradle of the race. He was from the land hallowed by the earthly life of the Son of God, and still rich in memories of his divine doings among men. He was now the apostle of the only religion that embraced the entire race in its love.

He was a Jew, but his Jewish consciousness had been changed by a divine re-creation, and now, like the love of God, it took into its grasp every sinning, suffering member of the race.

The other man was a gentile from Europe; a Greek from Macedonia, the land of Philip and his warlike son, who had thrown the prowess and prestige of Greek arms and authority over all Asia, and had made a handful of European mountaineers the masters of the world. He was of a civilization the finest in a natural order the world has ever seen. His religion was cold and heartless. It taught men to see more of God in the splendors of a Grecian sunset than in the face of a suffering fellow-man. It was also hopeless. Upon the temples of his god, above their glitter and magnificence, as well as in the soul of the worshiper, was written, "The world by wisdom knew not God." The handwriting was there. It only needed a Paul to interpret it and make it articulate in speech.

This, then, is the scene: On the one side Paul, the Jew, the representative apostle to the Gentiles of that religion which had burst its Jewish gates and was flowing in streams of salvation to all the race. On the other side the Macedonian, the representative Gentile, the man typical of humanity, through whom humanity, sinning, suffering, perishing, calls upon the representatives of Christianity for help through the divine and saving power of the gospel. The Gentile begs help of the Jew; the Greek seeks wisdom at the feet of the Barbarian. Upon this vision of St. Paul's forty centuries of Jewish history, replete with type, symbol, and prophecy pointing to this very hour and event, looked down with awful significance. Paul arose from the vision and went forth, assuredly gathering that God had called him to preach the gospel to the Greeks also. So we gather from this vision, and from that which called Peter to the Gentile household of Cornelius; from the parable of the Good Samaritan, rich in the prophecy of a universal brotherhood; from the great commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature;" from the fact that God would not allow the infant Church to remain in its Judaic home, but forced it, by persecution, to go into the regions beyond; from the scriptural doctrines of the fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man; from all these, and especially from an inward conviction

wrought in us by the Holy Ghost, do we assuredly gather that it is God's purpose that all men shall have the gospel, and that they shall have it at the hands of us unto whom are committed the oracles of God. Even now the Macedonian call from every quarter of the globe is coming—coming from one direction in the form of active, stirring appeals for the gospel, and from another issuing in the silent eloquence of universal ruin and decay.

Sympathy with Christ the Life of Missions.

There never was a time in the progress of Christianity when any man was at liberty to disregard the call of Christian missions. Especially is this the case now, when there is such a universal diffusion of scriptural knowledge. When once the claim has been soundly set forth, every believer who rejects it does so at the hazard of his soul. Christ spared no labor, no agony, in his work of saving men, and he has called every believer into the fellowship of his work and suffering. "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Cold indifference toward the souls for whom Christ died is humanity's highest insult of the blood which bought us. On the other hand, nothing so lifts and expands the horizon of our Christian consciousness as a deep and helpful sympathy with Christ in his efforts to save the world. No man who has not taken a careful and devout survey of the awful fact that the millions of the earth are perishing in their sins can have a just conception of the meaning of Christ's death, nor can he realize how blest he himself is by the gift of spiritual life and the blessings which follow in its train. This view of humanity's dying—dying not because there is no Christ for it, but because no gospel has been sent it—makes for devout men a Gethsemane, where ever and anon they fall prostrate and agonize with their agonizing Lord. God pity the Christian man who has never had sympathy enough with his Saviour to taste something of the bitterness of the garden! He who does not care for the perishing of men does not care for the dying of Christ. Sympathy with Christ is the life of missions.

The Relation of the Church to the Mission of Saving Man.

God has clearly revealed his purpose to save the world through the instrumentality of the Church. He has ordained no other means; he will use no other. St. Paul, in speaking

of Gentile salvation by the preaching of the gospel through the Church, says: "Which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: whereof I was made a minister, according to the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be made known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." This passage makes it clear that it is God's purpose to reveal his saving wisdom, not only to men, but also to angels, by the Church. Such is the work, and such the responsibility of the Church. But while God requires the salvation of the race at the hands of the Church, as of an instrument, he does not require it to furnish either the wisdom or the power requisite for the achievement of this vast result. God furnishes the power and the wisdom. "Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God," is Head over all things to the Church. He who said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth," said also, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." That same power which thundered with an earthquake at the heels of the departing disciples, as they went forth to preach the everlasting gospel, will upturn the deep foundations of the kingdom of darkness, and through the Church, will press the conquest of the cross to the very gates of hell! The Holy Spirit also is resident in the Church for its comfort and guidance. The Church, while submitting itself implicitly to His guidance, will never make a mistake or waste itself in unavailing effort. While all this is true, it is equally true that the Church sustains a relation to the work so intimate and essential that the work will not be done without it. The part which the Church is to perform is co-operating with God in this glorious work may be set forth in four items:

Item I. The Widow's Mites.

The touching incident of the widow's giving the two mites teaches the Church two important lessons. (1) That God may impart a large value to a gift, however small the amount of it, if it but be according to the ability of the giver. (2) That when our gifts are according to our ability, their value in God's hands is determined by the purpose and devotion of the giver. Hence the infallible Judge of all values said, "She hath cast in more than they all." We sometimes hear a man, who of his abundance has cast a contemptible pittance into the treasury of the Lord, apologize for his niggardliness by calling his dole the "widow's mites." Such a man is either an ignoramus, a knave, or a jester; slandering a pious widow—slandering an act so perfect in its order that the act and the mites outweighed all the golden gifts of the rich. We conclude that all God requires of the Church in giving is that it give the "widow's mites;" that is, that it give according to its ability, and with the pure purpose of glorifying God, and that it be done willingly. "For if there be a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not."

Item II. The Loaves and Fishes.

The great multitude of more than five thousand people was in a wilderness place, and a-hungred. Christ had compassion on them, and commanded the disciples to feed them. The disciples answered: "We have here but five loaves and two fishes." Christ said, "Bring them hither to me." He blessed the bread and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, who dispensed to the multitude. They all ate and were filled, and more was left than they first had. The lesson of this miracle is, that when the Church furnishes such means as it can command, the compassion of Christ, operating through his power, will multiply the provision and make it measure up to the utmost wants of the race. Give, therefore, according to the gospel rule, and do not withhold anything because it is small. The multiplying power is in God, and he has engaged to supply, by your agency, the bread of life to the famishing millions of men. How much of spiritual results will flow from the bestowment of so much money is not a question for the Church to ask. That is a matter of the divine

concern. This we know, that when the Church has done its duty, God will fulfill his promise to give the heathen to Christ for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession. Hoary systems of superstition and religion, however entempled and enshrined; wicked spirits in high places; the infidelity of men and the sullen hatred of devils combined, cannot resist the strokes of almighty love when it shall have untrammelled play through the Church of Christ. What an exhibition that would have been had the disciples said, "Five loaves and two fishes are but enough for thy disciples," and had left the multitude to go away hungering and fainting in the twilight of that day of the divine teaching! Let every member of the church note: The Church that does not furnish the "loaves and fishes," (1) misses the strengthening of its own faith by witnessing the wonderful power of the Lord in multiplying these elements; (2) it leaves the multitudes hungry for bread which the Lord would supply them by the consent and help of the Church; (3) it takes from the Lord the glory of illustrating in the eyes of men his mercy and his power. It robs itself. It robs the multitudes. It robs Christ.

Item III. The Alabaster Box.

When the Savior reclined at the supper of Simon, Mary came in, and from an alabaster box, poured forth three hundred pence worth of precious ointment upon his head. The disciples, prominently Judas, complained of the waste, and said that the ointment ought to have been sold and the proceeds given to the poor. But the Savior said: "Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath done what she could."

Any manifestation of love for Christ, whether it be little as two mites or much as three hundred pence is acceptable to him, and remains as a memorial.

The Church has been slow to realize that, in relation to the missionary cause, it held in its possession an alabaster box of precious ointment, which it might pour upon the Savior's head. This gift is Christian womanhood, the crowning glory of our Christian civilization. It is a pure product of the gospel, and is, therefore, in a peculiar sense due to Christ. It has in it a strange subtlety and supremacy of power which the military wisdom of the Church cannot fail to use for Christ. It is a hopeful sign that the Church, without compromising its important doctrine that woman's peculiar sphere is in the

home, is growing willing to consecrate a share of her time and energy to the work of evangelizing the world. The godly women are, by the consent of the Church, rallying to the call of the Master, and are doing a delicate and difficult work which men cannot do. This is Mary breaking the alabaster box, and pouring the ointment on the Savior's head. Christ is accepting this delicate memorial at the Church's hands, and will honor it with abundant honor. This movement is destined, under proper direction, to deepen and widen into stupendous success; and it will leave no train of evil in our homes. Happy will it be for the Church, and the world when to every Christian wife, mother, daughter, and sister may be applied the words of Christ, "She hath done what she could."

Item IV. Saul and Barnabas.

Antioch, in Syria, was the first center of Christian operations among the Gentiles. The apostles had obeyed the commission, "beginning at Jerusalem," and the circumference of the widening circle has fallen on Antioch. It was now to become itself the center of a wider influence. Here Barnabas was conducting a gracious revival, and the Holy Ghost was shaking the foundations of Venus and Bacchus. Barnabas sent for Saul. Saul came, and Antioch was captured for Christ. Then the Holy Ghost spoke to the Church and said, "Separate me Saul and Barnabas for the work whereunto I have called them." This was a call to the Church to send missionaries; not apostles going forth on their own responsibility, but missionaries—sent, sent by the Church. Judaism had not sent forth missionaries. It could not. Jerusalem was in the way. Centurial habits were in the way. Prejudicial maxims and enactments were in the way. Christ had said to a few chosen men in Judea, "Go," and they went without the backing of a Church at home. But when the normal state of the Church in relation to the salvation of man—humanity—was to set in, Christ spoke by the Holy Ghost to the Church, and said, SEND. He called it to send forth men of its own bosom, and having vital connection with its own living, throbbing heart. He called it to be a co-worker with himself and the apostles, and gave it a corresponding responsibility. The Church measured up to the demand, and set apart its best ministers to be missionaries. No wonder that

"at Antioch the disciples were first called Christians!" Thence they set out to win the world to Christ.

By way of answering the popular objection that we ought not to send abroad while there is so much need of work at home, it may here be remarked that the Church at Antioch might have answered the call of the Holy Ghost by saying: "Antioch is the most important of all places—an historic city, great in municipal extent. Here the Greek kings had their center for Syria in the days when that past civilization was at the height of its glory. Here the Roman kings have their representatives in the persons of the procurators. This city is full of learning and refinement and culture. Moreover, Daphne is hard by, and here sin is entempled and glorified and deified amid a splendor which it boasts nowhere else on earth. We must keep our strongest men at home. We must fortify the center, and not spend our strength on the regions beyond in mere experiment." But this apostolic Church did not answer thus. It knew by a holy intuition that the strength of a Church does not depend upon the learning, eloquence, or upon even the apostolic perfection of its ministry, but upon its living union with Christ, the Head. It knew that safety and growth at home were in the direct ratio of aggressiveness abroad. Therefore, at the call of the Holy Ghost, the Church laid its hands of blessing, sympathy, support, and authority upon Saul and Barnabas, and sent them forth. In view of these things, we need not be surprised when historians tell us that this Church grew until it numbered 100,000 souls in its communion. Here, then, we have set forth both the condition and work of the Church. It was fasting and praying when the Holy Ghost said, "Separate me Saul and Barnabas." Then it obeyed, and laid its hands of sympathy, authority, and support upon the apostles, and sent them forth. A Church to be truly missionary must be of this kind. It is not enough that a Church give; it must fast and pray, and send forth men with whom it shall maintain a living sympathy. The Church to which we belong is not wanting in good men—men "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost." Some of our best men are already in the field, and hundreds more await the command of the Church. They would even now be in the field if the spirit and contributions of the Church would sustain them there.

We have endeavored, by these four items, to set forth the relation of Christian men to the work of missions. We have the promise of God for this assurance, that when the Church has given its widow's mites, its loaves and fishes, and its alabaster box, and has crowned and glorified its gifts by the conferment of its Sauls and Barnabases, God will astound not only men, but principalities and powers, by the displays of his saving might among the heathen who are now without Christ, and therefore without hope in the world.

Do Missions Pay?

This question has been often asked, and always has in it the base, metallic ring of the marts. It has been repeatedly proved from authentic statistics that the bestowment of missionary money pays as an investment by commercial returns to the nations giving it. But with the "investment" view of the subject we have nothing at all to do. We ask the question in its pure relation to the death of Christ and the salvation of men. Do missions pay? We answer this question by asking another. WHAT IS A SOUL WORTH? Whose soul? (1) Your own. God has commanded that the gospel be preached to all men. He holds the Church responsible for the accomplishment of the work. He does not hold it responsible as a body, but in its individual membership. He holds YOU responsible according to the share of ability and opportunity he has given you. If you are disobeying this command, do not think that God will hold you guiltless. If you are not helping to spread the gospel, you are doing what you can to disappoint the great purpose of Christ to save the heathen. The case is this: The heathen is suffering and dying through ignorance of the saving power of Christ's blood. You can send him this knowledge; you are urged to do so. If you deliberately refuse, will Christ save you? You know your duty. Do it faithfully now, that in the last great day it may not be said to you. "Depart; ye knew your duty and did it not." (2) What is the soul of the heathen worth? Christ thought it worth dying for. The heathen is just such a man as you are, your religion excepted. He was made by the same God, and redeemed by the same blood. He has a similar capability of enjoying and suffering, hoping and despairing, of being saved or being damned. If you send him the gospel, he will accept it and be saved. God has made no

mistake in the adaptation of the means of salvation to the end of saving. Christ is the Desire of nations. Men, moved by their conscious need of him, are everywhere feeling after him in the dark. Throw on the light of the gospel, that they may grasp his hand and be lifted to heaven. If it be asked whether missions pay, in the sense of making an encouraging return to the Church in the form of conversions and Christian lives, the answer may at least be intimated by the following facts touching

The Progress of the Work.

The present missionary movement belongs to the present century. In the last decade of the last century, the spirit of aggressiveness began to take on organization, and four important societies were formed. These were the Baptist Missionary Society, the London Missionary Society, the British and Foreign Bible Society, and the Tract Society. From the beginning to the middle of this century, societies too numerous to mention sprung into being and entered with vigor upon their work. It has now come to pass that no Church worthy of the name is without such an organization within its bosom.

There were at the beginning of the present century seven missionary societies; there are now more than eighty. There were in the field about seventy missionaries; there are now about two thousand five hundred ordained European and American missionaries, and over seven thousand ordained native preachers. These are assisted by many lady missionaries and native helpers; making a total of about five thousand eight hundred, and nearly fourteen thousand native helpers. This gives a grand total of nineteen thousand five hundred workers. There are now about six hundred thousand communicants in the Mission Churches. The relative cost of missions is, of course, greater at the beginning than at any subsequent time. From 1849 to 1869, the average expenditure to each convert in the Telugu Mission was \$460; since that time it has been but \$25. This has been properly accounted for by two facts: (1) Native ministers, who take the place of the foreign so soon as churches become well established, are much less costly. (2) The increase in members increases the contributions; for it is a fact worthy of note that heathen converts show their estimate of the new religion by liberal contributions to its support. For instance, the child-

ren in our Brazilian Sunday-school give an average of \$1.50 per annum for missions. The average Church-member in this rich and Christian country gives about twenty cents. The Fiji Islands, which at the beginning of this century were full of the habitations of cruelty, where the inhabitants fed on human flesh, now contain over thirty thousand Church-members—decent, orderly Christian people, who pay annually for religious purposes \$15,000. They have also over forty thousand children in Sunday-schools, being trained in Christian doctrine and work. The Sandwich Islands, which but a few years ago contained a population of apparently hopeless cannibals, now give \$24,000 annually for the support of missions in the neighboring islands. One church sustains five foreign missionaries, and some of the congregations give as much as \$4 per member for religious uses. In other words, those reformed cannibals give more on an average than we do.

The writer had the pleasure not many months ago of hearing a minister of the Presbyterian Church, who was one of the first missionaries to Africa, relate his experience in that benighted land. He went out about fifty years ago. The Dark Continent was then in the very blackness of darkness. Now there are on the west coast alone one hundred organized congregations; and three hundred islands of Southern and Eastern Polynesia have utterly abandoned idolatry. Thirty-five years ago, Madagascar was rankly heathen, persecuting unto death the few followers of Jesus there. Now there are more than two hundred thousand professed Christians in the island; among them the queen, who a few years since announced to her nation and to the world that the government was to be Christian henceforth. This island has a population of about five millions; and it will within less than twenty-five years from to-day be recorded among the truly Christian nationalities of the earth. This transformation has been wrought within less than three decades, without the sword on the Christian side, and in spite of the sword on the heathen side. "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty!"

The good work of evangelization is going on in Africa, Polynesia, Madagascar, Europe, South America, Mexico, India, Burmah, China, Japan, Palestine, and in many islands of the deep. Note carefully the following facts: (1) The per cent.

of increase in members is greater in heathen than in Christian countries. This another proof that the gospel of Christ is the gospel for them as well as for us. It proves also that if you send it to them they will accept it. The responsibility for the absence of it from these dark places is with you. (2) They give more readily and liberally to the support of the gospel, according to their ability. They are not, in point of time, so far removed from the accursed experiences of heathenism as to be unmindful of the wants and woes of their neighbors. (3) God has by his providence so opened up the world that gospel may be preached everywhere, and you may send your aid with cheapness and security. Missionary work makes commerce, and commerce regulates passage and exchange, making both cheap and secure. (4) No business of such vast proportions and importance is operated on a cheaper scale than is the missionary work in its collections and disbursements. The old slander that seventy-five cents of every dollar given were expended in transmitting the remaining twenty-five to the heathen has not in it the value of even a mutilated coin. It was spurious from the mint. Let it cease to have any currency in even the stingiest of Methodist circles. It is true, on the other hand, that of every dollar given about three cents are required to transmit the remaining ninety-seven.

The Place of Missions in the Common Preaching of the Gospel.

The adaptation of the gospel to the spiritual and temporal wants of all men is one of its sublimest and most attractive features. If it is not for all men, it is not from God. How can a minister fail to see this and to urge it upon his hearers?

Yet some preach the gospel as if it were made for certain circuits and stations exclusively. The assumption that the doctrine of missions will be unacceptable to men is a mistake. If Christ be held up as the Saviour of all men, he will in this relation to the race draw forth the interest and love of all men. The human heart is such that it must bow to the commanding majesty of the doctrine that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life." And this is the massive foundation on which the doctrine of missions rests.

No preacher need ever mistrust the winning force of the doctrine. God is responsible for the pledge that it shall capture the race. Preach the gospel of missions, therefore, as the gospel of Christ, and put the hearer on his own responsibility in relation to it, as you do in his relation to the doctrine of repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus. Preach the doctrine and duty clearly, strongly, boldly, authoritatively. Take that thrilling and divine phrase, "God so loved the world," and send it hot with fervid earnestness and holy unction into the ears and hearts of men until they cannot hear it, or read it, or think it without quickening heart-throbs and a deepening zeal for the reclamation of Christ's heritage. Let every preacher note this: that in proportion as a genuine and permanent zeal for missions is increased there is an increase of faithfulness in the support of all the essential and useful institutions of Christianity. The writer has never known a man forward in the advocacy and support of missions who was laggard in the support of any interest of the Church.

Missions in the Family.

The strength of the Church is in the family. The hope of missions is there. There are two things which the children of every household should be taught to do in behalf of missions. One is to pray for them; the other, to contribute to them. Pray and pay. Children should be taught to pray for the heathen for two reasons: (1) If they are properly taught by sensible and pious parents, they will pray with the spirit and the understanding, and their prayers, like those of all the saints, will go up as incense to God. They will be heard and answered in blessings upon the heathen and the children. (2) Although the children may not always fully understand the form they use, the habit of praying for the heathen will be established under the most favorable conditions for being remembered and intelligently used in the years to come. In the second place, teach the children to give. Let them know the duty as contained in the Bible. They will respond to it. Then invent ways by which they may earn from their parents or others, through their own labor, little sums to be given weekly or monthly to the cause of missions. This order

closely followed will add new interest to the household, and will introduce a new element of happiness into the life of the children: It will also after a while wipe from our household-life this reproach: that while thousands of Chinese families give each one hundred and fifty dollars a year for ancestor-worship, the families of Methodism do not give on an average so much as one hundred cents a year to save the heathen from the perdition of this life and from that of the world to come.

Missions in the Sunday-school.

Every Sunday-school ought to be a missionary society. There is no reason to the contrary. If not all the members are able to give, most of them are. Every superintendent should teach the whole school in this matter by reading and explaining missionary scriptures—the New Testament is full of them. He should also set apart missionary days, and get up an interesting programme of missionary songs and readings, having the children to take a part. Each school ought to set apart at least one Sabbath in the month as missionary day, and make special contributions on that day. The superintendent will do well to call special attention to this day a week beforehand, and urge attendance and contributions. Superintendents will find new life infused into their schools by this means. Every teacher should regard his class as a missionary society, and use his peculiar personal influence to establish in each of his pupils the habit of praying for missions and of contributing to them. One school in the Conference has given \$164 for this cause, after paying for all the literature it needed. This was an average of at least \$1.25 per member. One class in that school gave \$75 of this amount, which was about \$4 per member. This was done without special gatherings. It was done by small but regular contributions. Let every superintendent and teacher see to it that his school shall send up a special offering to the cause of missions this year.

Raising Money.

The following suggestions will be found of service in procuring funds: (1) *Begin in time.* The securing of funds to conduct the enterprises of the Church is as much the duty of preachers and members as the preaching and reception of the

gospel, and ought to be begun at the same time. The preacher who postpones this work till the year is well advanced will not, can not be successful. He may by extra diligence be comparatively successful, but not absolutely so. Some congregations need to have a conscience created on this subject. Begin at once to develop a sense of obligation. Some men may be offended, and possibly go off. Let them go—their stinginess go with them; the blessings of God will not.

(2) Take the collections separately. The Church has been fully persuaded that this is best, and has made it obligatory on pastors. (See Discipline, page 186, Art. XVI.) We are not to amend the Discipline, but to keep it. He who takes the collections together owes about twenty-five per cent. of the whole to the cause of missions, for he has deprived it of that much by the use of his method instead of the Church's method. He ought to keep the law or pay the deficit. This is simple New Testament honesty.

(3) Do not apologize for taking collections. The giving spirit of a congregation is always weakened by a manifest weakness in him who asks them to give. Apology always indicates either a misgiving on the part of the collector as to the righteousness of his claim or a mistrust of the congregation. Either of these exhibitions is always detrimental to the cause in hand. Take your collections in the name of Christ and for Christ. The men are his, the goods are his. He has given the goods in trust to the men to be used by them for his glory. If properly taught and properly approached, men will respond by giving to Christ that which is his due. A scene of this kind occurred once in connection with this cause: It was the last appointment for the year; a large congregation was present, and in sympathy with the occasion, the sermon was finished. The pastor said: "It becomes my duty now"—he was mistaken; it had become his duty nearly twelve months before this—"take the collections. You know that I have not asked you for a cent for any cause this year. I will take all the collections together. They are as follows: (1) A deficit in the pastor's salary; (2) for Bishops; (3) for Conference claimants; (4) for home missions; and (5) for foreign missions. The whole amount collected to-day will be apportioned to these causes pro rata." Then followed a long pumping process, in which every stroke of the pump showed how hollow

the element was. The congregation dispersed. The interests represented there that day went off at a heavy discount, both in the actual figures and in the estimate of those who witnessed this scene. The giving spirit must be very robust to survive an ordeal such as that. (4) Collect from everybody—from all the members of the church and all the friends of it who regularly accept its ministry. Not half the members will be reached on collection days. See them at home, and talk to each one, if need be, privately and closely. If there be any brethren after the type of some in the days of Post Oak Circuit—men who shut their eyes and sing when the hat goes round—note such, and do “thy diligence” to bring them in afterward. Gifts from such men are precious trophies which the Church cannot afford to lose—as a means of grace to the givers. Take your collections by subscription, allowing to any who may wish it the privilege of paying down; and see that all the others use the privilege of paying up before Conference.

Our Missions.

The M. E. Church, South, has its missionary work divided into two branches: (1) Home missions; (2) foreign missions. The home missions are within the boundaries of the Annual Conferences to which they respectively belong, and are provided for by the Conference Boards of Missions. The W. N. C. Conference has now within its boundaries some thirty-five of these. They consist of poor or undeveloped sections of country, the inhabitants of which are either unable to support a minister in full or have not yet been educated up to the point of doing so. Help is furnished them in order that by being furnished with a faithful and efficient ministry they may be developed into self-sustaining charges. Many of these missions are developing rapidly, and promise soon to relieve the Board of any further responsibility for their support. Fourteen such works were raised to self-supporting charges at the last Conference. The Board has enlarged this work this year, and we MUST raise more money than was raised last year. The Board has faith in the Church that it will not allow the collections to come short. For the honoring of this faith, for the purpose of helping the destitute of our own communion, and for the glory of Christ, let every Methodist within our bounds make a liberal contribution to

this cause as early in the year as possible. Do not wait for the regular collection, but hand the amount to your pastor and ask him to forward it to the treasurer. The men who occupy these fields are already in need of money for the common comforts of life. Our foreign missions are in China, Mexico, Brazil and Japan. These are under the care of the Parent or General Board at Nashville.

The China mission was undertaken in 1848. In that year Rev. Charles Taylor went from the South Carolina Conference, and was joined by Rev. B. Jenkins, another member of the same Conference, in the following year. In 1852, Rev. W. G. E. Cunningham went to that field from the Holston Conference; in 1853, Rev. D. C. Kelley, Rev. J. L. Belton and Rev. J. W. Lambuth; in 1854, Rev. Y. J. Allen and Rev. L. M. Wood, in 1877, Rev. A. P. Parker and Rev. W. R. Lambuth, M. D.; in 1879, Rev. C. F. Reid; in 1880, Rev. W. W. Royall, Rev. K. H. McLean and Rev. G. R. Loehr. Since 1880 other workers have been sent out as the state of the treasury would allow, and the work has been in every way most hopefully enlarged. The establishment of the Anglo-Chinese University, now commanding the patronage of many of the best native families in Shanghai, and of a system of day-schools is doing much to place Christianity in a winning relation to Chinese people of standing. The work of the Woman's Board has been blessed with extraordinary signs of divine approval in all the departments of its work in China. Not only in that field, but elsewhere we have no more hopeful work than that carried on by the consecrated women of our communion.

The very latest statistics from the China mission are: Number of charges 14; missionaries, 14; native workers, 32; members, 530; probationers, 503; Sunday-schools, 29; teachers, 93; pupils, 1153; colleges, 2; pupils, 247; day-schools, 33; pupils, 539; hospitals, 1; dispensaries, 1.

The Central Mexico mission was established in 1873 under the ministry of a native Mexican, Alejo Hernandez, who was soon after reinforced by the appointment of Rev. J. T. Daves as superintendent of the mission. There are now in the Republic of Mexico three annual conferences. Protestantism has given 62 martyrs to the cause of the gospel within the republic in the last quarter of a century. But this blood

was not shed in vain. The Church has made wonderful progress and now great liberty is granted in the preaching of the gospel. The members in the Mexico mission conferences are as follows: Charges, 76; missionaries, 17; native traveling preachers, 77; native workers, 22; members, 5,724; Sunday-schools, 120; teachers, 225; pupils, 3,321; colleges, 1; pupils, 34; day-schools, 2; pupils, 75.

The Brazil mission was planted in 1875 under the guidance of Rev. J. A. Newman. In the following year Rev. J. J. Ransom was appointed superintendent. These first laborers were soon reinforced by other devoted and successful servants of the Church. Prominent among these were Rev. J. L. Kennedy of the Holston Conference, and Rev. J. W. Koger of South Carolina. The following are the latest statistics from the Brazil mission: Number of charges, 20; missionaries 22; native traveling preachers, 15; native workers, 9; members, 1,254; Sunday-schools, 31; teachers, 74; pupils, 930; colleges, 6; pupils, 396; day-schools, 5; pupils, 278.

The youngest of our great missions is the one in Japan. It was opened in 1886 under authority of a resolution introduced by Bishop Jno. C. Keener at the May meeting of 1885. The missionaries appointed to open the work were Rev. J. W. Lambuth, Rev. E. O. Dukes and Rev. Walter R. Lambuth, M. D. These brethren were at that time members of the China mission. The Japan mission conference was organized 1892. From the minutes of the fourth session held by Bishop E. R. Hendicks, in Kobe, Japan, August 29-September 3, 1895, we have the following statistics: Number of charges, 14; missions, 35; native traveling preachers, 6; native workers, 82; members, 552; probationers, 89; Sunday-schools, 58; teachers, 71; pupils, 1,455; colleges 1; pupils, 70; day-schools, 11; pupils, 258.

Total statistics in the four foreign fields: Number of charges, 124; preachers and helpers, 259; members and probationers, 8,672; Sunday-schools, 238; teachers, 463; pupils, 6,859; colleges and day-schools, 61; pupils, 1,897; 1 hospital and 1 dispensary.

The Parent Board has other missions under its supervision within the boundaries of our own nation. These are all of great importance and interest, but there is not space to speak of them here.

Missionary Intelligence.

It cannot be denied that much of the indifference which is manifested toward the missionary work is due to ignorance. Men cannot be intelligent concerning this cause and at the same time indifferent toward it. One of the first duties of every intelligent Christian is to use and circulate missionary literature. Parents who hold the great Arminian doctrine of full salvation for all men in Christ and who do not furnish to their children missionary periodicals and books are preparing the rising generation for infidelity concerning that precious

truth, or for a practical contradiction of it through indifference. Did you know, dear reader, that this century has produced enough missionary literature to constitute of itself a magnificent library, and that any one having this library would, in any circle, be regarded as a man of broad, rich learning? And yet there is reason for capital doubt whether one-third of the members of the church in our Conference ever so much as saw a missionary pamphlet or periodical. Parents should take for themselves and their sons the Methodist Review of Missions and for themselves and their daughters the Woman's Advocate of Missions. The first of these excellent monthlies costs only one dollar per year and the second but fifty cents. The World for Christ, costs only ten cents per year and ought to be taken by every one of the million and a half of Southern Methodists. On the line of Home missions and Parsonage Aid work, Our Homes, by Miss Lucinda B. Helm will be found of the greatest assistance to the workers in that important and rapidly growing field of church work. All these periodicals are published by our own house at Nashville and are the best for us. There can be obtained at our publishing house a number of pamphlets and cheap books on missions which are full of pith, point and power, and which are easily in reach of persons without means. Every pastor and Sunday-school superintendent should have constantly on hand the catalogue of Missionary Literature, prepared by our Secretaries, by the aid of which they shall be prepared to intelligently direct the growing demand for missionary information. Pastors cannot do a better work for themselves and the cause which they represent than to busy themselves in the circulation of such literature among their people. The general diffusion of missionary intelligence will wake the church into new life on many lines and gifts of hundreds will be multiplied into gifts of thousands.

A Personal Word.

Now, my dear reader, the final question is not whether Christ shall conquer the world. This he will do. The edict has gone forth. God has said it. The conquering chariot is impelled by almighty love, and no power can stop it until its victorious wheels have crushed every opposing system. He who stands in the way by indifference or opposition may gain for himself the infamous distinction of being crushed, but nothing more—he cannot stop or stay the progress of the victorious Christ as he moves to the conquest of the race. The Gospel Angel of the Apocalypse flies on. Indifferent believers gaze and wonder at his progress, and under the shadow of his plenipotent wings infidels scream themselves hoarse with the hope of causing delay; but regardless of both alike, he flies on, bearing the good tidings of great joy to all the nations of the earth, to all the islands of the deep. Fly on thou glorious Gospel, Evangel, every beat of thy massive wings instinct with divine power, until thou shalt bring thy burden of redeemed humanity into the New Jerusalem—Capital City of God!

Seven Test Questions.

Every one who has read this paper carefully through is earnestly urged to take his pencil and conscientiously write in the places provided for them the answers to the following questions :

1. Do you love the cause of missions, as the cause of Christ?

Answer.....

2. Do you pray regularly for the success of this work?

Answer.....

3. How much did you give last year as an expression of your love?

Answer \$.....

4. Was that according as God had prospered you, and was it given with a willing mind?

Answer

5. How much do you think you ought to give for missions this year?

Answer \$.....

6. How much will you give this year, by the help of God?

Answer \$.....

7. Are you, in short, so discharging your duty to this great cause that you will be guiltless when God judges the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ?

Answer

The sum of all these questions is: Will you help, or hinder? In view of the awful issues of a coming judgment, I would rather be a heathen than a dead-head on the Ship of Zion.

CALL NUMBER

Vol.

Date (for periodical)

Copy No.

244
No 974
P

MAR 11 1970

244 1974

P

22901

1970

